



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information
Press Service



WASHINGTON, D. C.

Release - Immediate.

March 3, 1930.

BANDED HERRING GULL FOUND
WITH BEAK FASTENED SHUT

A half-starved herring gull carrying on its leg a Bureau of Biological Survey band was found on the beach at Mayport, Florida, its bill tightly closed and fastened with a piece of cord, according to recent press dispatches noted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Records of the Biological Survey show that the bird was one of a number of gulls banded at Gooseberry Island, Maine, six months ago. Officials of the bureau point out that it is obvious the bird bander had no part in tying up the gull's beak, and admit that if he had, the indignation aroused in Florida by such an incident would be fully justified. Had the beak been tied at the time of banding, the bird would have been dead long ago. In fact, part of the string was attached to the gull's leg, indicating that the bird accidentally entangled itself in a piece of fish-line, fish-net, or other cord, and that it was not the victim of a malicious trick.

All bird-banding cooperators, the Biological Survey said, are carefully selected individuals who have been indorsed as reliable by responsible officials or ornithologists. They operate only under Federal and State permits and are instructed to use every care to see that no harm comes to the birds with which they are working. Although more than 600,000 birds have been banded in the course of the bureau's experimental work the last 10 years, fatalities for which bird-banding cooperators were in any way responsible have been so few as to be negligible.

-----W-----

797-30